

EXPLANATION OF THE ENGRAVINGS [p. 156].

Fig. 1 is a copy of Leguat's engraving.

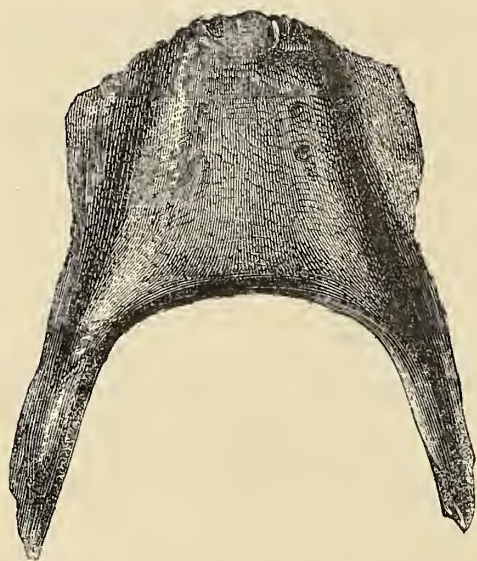
Fig. 2. The same drawn in profile, and amended from Leguat's description.

Both birds represented $\frac{1}{25}$ th of the natural size.

1876
252 XV.—*Evidence of a Species, perhaps extinct, of large Parrot*
(*Psittacus mauritianus*, Owen), *contemporary with the Dodo,*
in the Island of Mauritius. By Prof. OWEN, F.R.S., &c.

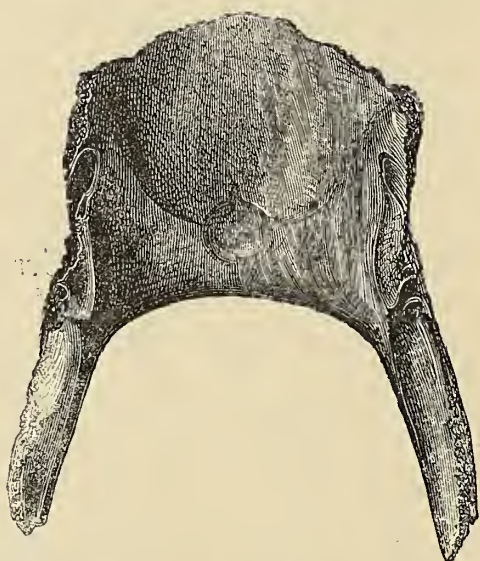
In a paper on the bones of the Dodo, read before the Zoological Society of London, January 9th, 1866, I noted a part of the lower mandible of a large Psittacine bird in the enumeration of the series of bones which had been transmitted to me by Mr. George Clark from the Mauritius.

Fig. 1.



Under or outer view of gonys,
Psittacus mauritianus, Ow.
Natural size.

Fig. 2.



Upper or inner view of gonys,
Psittacus mauritianus, Ow.
Natural size.

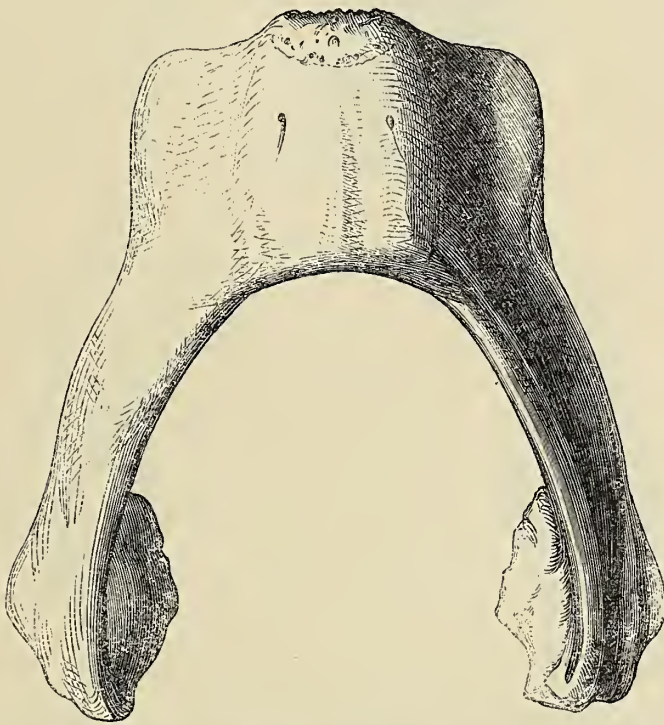
This specimen (figs. 1 and 2) has the same deep olive-brown tint as most of the bones of the Dodo, and, from all its physical characters, has been evidently obtained under the same conditions; it may therefore be confidently accepted as evidence of another, perhaps lost, certainly now unknown, species of bird, which formerly existed in the Island of Mauritius. Still, as in all probability the species of Parrot which the present solitary

specimen represents had powers of flight, there is the greater probability of some stray representative being still discoverable, like the *Notornis* in New Zealand, in some uncultivated and sequestered part of the island.

The specimen includes the 'gonys' or symphysial part of of the lower jaw, with the thicker inferior part of the two 'rami,' the parts preserved measuring 2 inches in length, and 1 inch 9 lines in breadth. The length of the gonys at the mid line or symphysis is 1 inch, the breadth of the gonys, as far as preserved, is 1 inch 3 lines; but the thin upper or lateral margins have been broken away, at the commencement of the rami, down to their thicker convex inferior border.

The outer surface of the gonys shows a less rounded and more angular transverse convexity than in the *Ara*'s (fig. 3.);

Fig. 3.



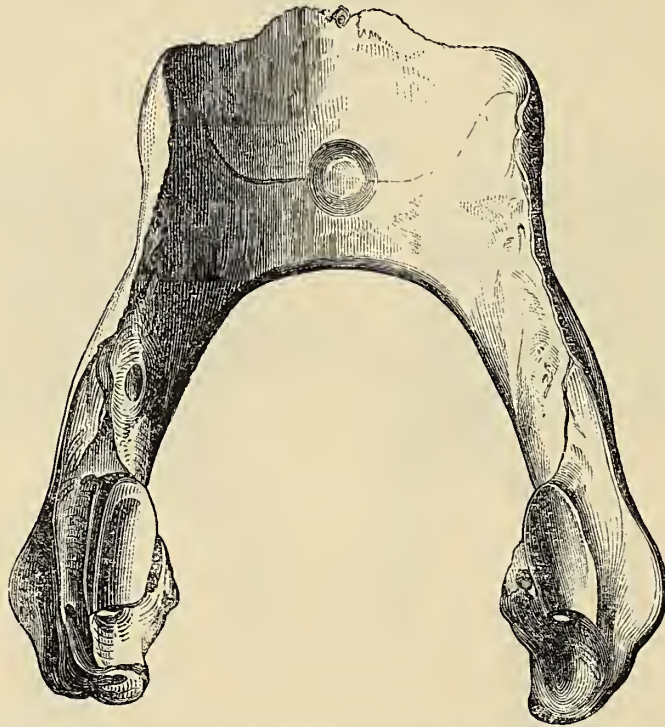
Under or outer view of lower jaw, *Ara macao* (Linn.).

the sides bend up upon the mid tract at almost the same angles as in the lower mandible of the great Australian Cockatoos (*Microglossum*). In the breadth of the back part of the gonys, and in the angles at which the lower borders of the rami diverge backwards therefrom, the Mauritian specimen also resembles *Microglossum* more than it does *Ara*. Near the anterior

margin, which is thinned off to an edge, there are, as in the Maccaws and Parrots, grooves and foramina for the small nerves and vessels of the formative part of the horny beak-sheath.

But the most decisive test of the nature of the present fragment is afforded by the characters of the upper or inner surface (fig. 2). This, of course, is concave transversely, and shows a more regular upcurving of the sides of the gonys than the external surface does. It is marked by the curved line, convex backward, which, commencing from near the antero-lateral angles of that surface, extends to a shallow sub-circular depression in the posterior third part of the symphysis.

Fig. 4.



Upper or inner view of lower jaw, *Ara macao* (Linn.).

A pair of minute foramina marks the anterior border of this depression. The curved line, in recent Parrots (fig. 4), marks the posterior extent of the thin internal horny plate of the sheath of the lower mandible.

In size the Mauritian Cockatoo, represented by the above-described fragment of skeleton, appears to have equalled the Hyacinthine and Blue-and-yellow Aras, or Maccaws (figs. 3 and 4), and the larger Cockatoos (*Microglossa*) of Australia. Mr. Gould

has figured a species, *M. aterrimum* (Gmelin), now inhabiting New Guinea, and Cape York on the northern coast of Australia, in the Supplement to his work on the Birds of Australia.

My colleague Mr. George R. Gray has kindly called my attention to the Cockatoo figured under the name of "Perroquet Mascarin"* by Levaillant in his 'Histoire des Perroquets,' vol. ii. pl. 139 (fol., 1805).

In the text Levaillant remarks :—"Le Mascarin se trouve à Madagascar et même, assure-t-on, à l'île de Bourbon. Il est encore très-rare dans nos cabinets; du moins n'y ai-je vu que trois de ses individus, dont l'un chez Mauduit, l'autre chez l'abbé Aubry, et le troisième au Muséum d'histoire naturelle à Paris" (p. 112).

So far as can be judged from the coloured plate of the bird, the lower mandible appears to have the same angular shape transversely, at the lower part of its base, as is manifested by the Mauritian gonyes (fig. 1); but it is inferior in size. The *Psittacus pachyrhynchus* of West Africa exemplifies also a similar proportion and form of beak, but is likewise on a smaller scale.

I think I may venture to add the *Psittacus mauritianus* to the list of species of birds of the island of the Dodo, and anticipate with confidence that materials will one day be obtained enabling the ornithologist to determine the subgeneric section of *Psittacidae* to which this large Cockatoo may belong. Enough is given, even by the solitary fragment described, to show that it has nearer affinities to Old World forms (African and Australasian) than to the New World Maccaws.

XVI.—On Five New Species of Birds from the Feejee Islands.

By GUSTAV HARTLAUB, M.D., For. Mem. Z.S., &c.

1. RALLINA PÆCILOPTERA.

Supra obscure rufo-fusca, subtus obscure plumbea; mento et gula albidis; genis brunneis; fascia brevi poneoculari plumbea; subalaribus nigris, albo maculatis; remigibus ferrugineis, fasciis angustioribus nigris transversim notatis, primi

* [*Mascarinus madagascariensis*, Lesson.—Ed.]